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BULLETIN

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In-Service Training as a Program for Staff Development

(By a State Department for the Rural Child Welfare Agency)

BESSIE E. TROUT

Director of Training, Bureau of Child Welfare, New York State Department of Social Welfare

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE agencies alike have been struggling with the problem of staff development. This problem becomes one of increasing concern as interest grows to maintain and improve standards of child care during this period of stress. What is in-service training? What is the way in which this help is made available to staff members? The League has invited a series of articles, of which this is the second. The first appeared in the June issue of the BULLETIN, when Miss Fern Lowry discussed supervision as a means of staff development. In a later issue there will appear another discussion on in-service training in an institution.—ED.

IN discussing "in-service training" one starts with the realization that the term itself has not yet "jelled" as to meaning. Unlike the term "supervision," it does not define itself either as to the kind of service it is or with regard to its place in the agency. To one person it may mean a single device to meet a peak of need in the agency, such as a method to orient new staff, to another it may mean an "institution." The confusion around it is, no doubt, due in part to the fact that its use is comparatively new, in the sense of a planned program, to social work agencies and also to the fact that one of its characteristics is the range in pattern that is necessary in order to adapt it to given situations.

The need for supervision as a part of an agency's program, as well as its place in the agency's structure, has been demonstrated for many years. The need for in-service training, on the other hand, is only beginning to be recognized, and the form it should take and its place in the agency structure are not yet clearly understood. Discussion of in-service training, therefore, must give consideration to why it is needed and how it fits into the agency's program, as well as to the methods best adapted to meet the worker's needs.

The general concept of in-service training is that of a planned program for the training of staff, on-the-job, in order that the agency may better carry out its responsibility. This article will discuss the child welfare training program of the New York State Department of Social Welfare, which has a two-fold purpose: (1) the development of its own staff and (2) the development of the county child welfare staffs. Discussion here, however, will be confined largely to the program

for staff development in a public child welfare agency in the rural areas.

The Need for an In-Service Training Program

The need for any in-service training program is determined by the needs of the workers in relation to the nature of the agency's responsibility. In New York State, responsibility for the care of children is vested in the local public welfare unit, which means generally that each county selects and employs its own child welfare staff which averages from one to three workers, in the rural county. The public agency, unlike the private agency, has its responsibility defined by law. It must consider all requests for help and, therefore, cannot limit its intake in relation to its ability to give service. It has a volume of work to be done regardless of the availability of competent staff. The general shortage of trained, experienced child welfare workers means that many workers must be employed who are without adequate preparation—either with regard to professional training or specialized experience. Added to this problem is the fact of limited county budgets. The workers then must, in some way, acquire the necessary professional training and experience while "on-the-job."

There is also another group of workers, increasing in number, who have various degrees of professional training and experience, but who must adapt their knowledge to new situations. For some of these workers it means shifting from a large, private, departmentalized agency in a city, to the rural public child welfare job, where they are faced with the responsibility for all phases of the work. Whether they are trained or untrained, however, they usually

work alone or with one or two other workers and frequently they have no local case supervision. The usual need for stimulation on the job and for keeping abreast of changing techniques is accentuated by reason of this isolation of the rural setting.

It is important to consider, too, the nature of the agency's responsibility in relation to the needs of the staff. Child welfare includes responsibility for the understanding and treatment of social problems as they relate to the child and his family. For children separated from their parents, it carries a degree of responsibility corresponding to that of a parent. It is essential, then, that the worker have professional training with specialized experience in child welfare.

How These Needs Are Met

It is obvious that where there is this local responsibility, as is true in New York State, the average rural county which employs from one to two child welfare workers cannot develop its own facilities for in-service training. The responsibility, therefore, of making possible professional growth on the job must be shared or fully assumed by the State. In New York State a training program to assist the county agencies was made possible by the State Department through state-federal planning and the use of Child Welfare Services funds made available under the Social Security Act.

The training program has been shaped in the light of the needs of the child welfare workers. For the workers who lacked adequate fundamental preparation it was necessary to begin with basic principles of social case work as they apply to child welfare. Since the kind of help these workers needed was a combination of theory, such as is taught in a school of social work, plus help in using it in their day-to-day practice, the kind of training best fitted to their needs was "teaching" on the job.

Training-on-the-job then is selected to meet specific needs of workers and continues for such period of time, usually from one to three years, as seems necessary for the worker to function adequately with the help of administrative supervision from the regional office. The workers for whom it is generally selected are:

1. Those who lacked professional training or case work experience in child welfare.
2. Those who had some training and experience but who had difficulty in adapting their knowledge to a new setting.
3. Those who were undertaking a responsibility new to them, such as that of case supervision.

This latter group is increasing in number as one-worker counties increase their staff and the senior worker assumes supervision of the junior worker.

For all the workers there is particular need for exchange of thinking with others facing problems similar to their own and discussion of the skills that are essential to their daily work. Group meetings under leadership of the training consultant have been planned on a full day monthly basis for all child welfare workers in a given area.

Discussion of the place of the training program in the agency calls for some description of the organization of the Department. The State Department of Social Welfare has no direct service to children other than through the licensing and certifying of foster homes. Its administrative supervision over the child welfare agencies in the county is carried out through its seven regional offices. The training unit operates under the Bureau of Child Welfare in the central office.

The regional office is aware of the needs of the local workers. These are discussed with the central office in relation to the services it has available, which include the granting of educational leave, a demonstration, such as one to show the need for additional staff and in-service training. One service is frequently used in connection with another. In-service training, for example, is generally used preceding educational leave for a worker, and following her return from the school of social work, to help her integrate knowledge in her daily work.

Decisions regarding the need for training are made jointly between the regional office and the training unit in the central office. The regional child welfare staff interprets in-service training to the local agency, which decides whether or not it wishes to request the service.

Emphasis in Training

In-service training, with the inadequately trained or experienced worker, differs from teaching in the school room or from student training in the field in so far as it is affected by the conditions under which it takes place. To begin with, the worker has full responsibility for all treatment, and thereby for giving help on problems much beyond her understanding. The consultant cannot, as she would with a student worker, select the situations in which she will give treatment with regard to the worker's ability—whether or not she is "ready" for them. The worker does not have the agency protection inherent in the case supervisor. Not only is she responsible for helping the individual, but the community holds her responsible. The consultant then must begin by helping the worker recognize what is involved in treatment of individuals, and at the same time must take into consideration her tempo and capacity for growth.

The time element in in-service training is a factor in that it places greater demand for initiative on the worker than is necessary in the weekly conference, generally a part of student supervision. The consultant visits the county once a month, spending a period of from two to three days. This means that, following discussion of how to proceed on a given problem, the worker is "on her own" for the period of a month. She must depend on her own judgment in emergency situations and in moving ahead in treatment. Although the disadvantages of this arrangement are obvious, it has its values as a discipline in facilitating "learning to walk alone." She learns where she can depend on her own ability and at what points she needs the greatest assistance.

Any in-service training program has as its ultimate goal a better quality of service to the individual. In the rural public child welfare agency the fact that in-service training is not a part of the local child welfare agency means that the consultant during each visit reviews with the county commissioner, who is the head of the agency, the high points covered in her discussions with the worker. Occasionally the county commissioner sits in on the discussions when they are related to general subjects such as adoption or selection of foster homes. This means that it is possible for the commissioner to see where treatment of the individual indicates the need for change in agency policy. This means too that when the commissioner, as head of the agency, is in close touch with the direct training program, he is kept constantly aware of what is required in good practice and is able not only to influence conditions of work but also to interpret the reason for certain practices to the community. The consultant is also able to keep the commissioner informed of the points at which the worker needs his help and at which she needs time to build up her experience adequately.

Relationship Between Supervisor and Worker

The importance of relationship as the medium in teaching, whether between supervisor and worker or teacher and pupil, is generally recognized. The fact that the agency requests the training service sets the stage for a unique relationship between the training consultant and the worker. The consultant is in the agency at its request, she has no authority and, therefore, does not assume responsibility for the job itself, as does an agency supervisor. She is not "over" the worker. The consultant's sole purpose in coming to the agency is to help the worker in relation to her job. Therefore, she and the worker share a common goal—to see that an individual receives the help he needs.

This common purpose helps to create freedom in relationship which contributes to the worker's ease in discussing her poor work or her inadequacies. Without the pressure of agency administration, the consultant is also freer to adapt her methods of teaching to the worker's individual needs. This relationship is also influenced by the rural setting. The worker welcomes the consultant by reason of her isolation. There is an informality inherent in the country life which lessens fear and which allows her to discuss more freely her thoughts and feelings around the job.

The range in content of training is as broad as the job itself. The eleven points so clearly outlined by Miss Fern Lowry in her recent article in this BULLETIN on the direction of supervision would at one time or another be covered in training-on-the-job. The differences are largely in emphasis around the needs of the worker and the necessity to adapt general principles and skills to the rural setting. This emphasis is centered about (1) helping the worker to develop a philosophy to guide her in the job; (2) increasing professional knowledge and skills and (3) developing understanding and ability for leadership.

In helping a worker to develop a philosophy, she must start with a sense of values and a concept of what it means to help people in trouble. She must have as a part of herself a sensitiveness to human hurt and a respect for the worth of an individual. What does this actually mean?

Let us consider the average worker who comes to the agency without professional preparation. Usually she has not decided "to go into social work" as has the student in the professional school. Instead she has been concerned about securing one of the few available jobs in her community. She does not know what the job involves but she feels secure in the community because of her status as a person. She is a part of the community life and shares the general attitudes of the community regarding their standard of living. For this worker then who has "grown up" in the community, training must begin by helping her to separate herself from her setting. She must gain distance between herself and the group (community) before she can gain sufficient perspective to see each person as an individual without regard to his ability to live up to the standards set by the group. She must be able to see him not through the eyes of the community as "not much good," but rather as a person who has his own way of looking at things, who needs help and understanding. As she comes to understand why people must behave as they do, in light of all that has happened to them, she sees "laziness" not as mere indifference and a cause for censure, but

as an indication of his need for help. She realizes that—

"Much madness is divinest sense
To a discerning eye.
Much sense the starkest madness."

She must interpret this new understanding to the community whose opinions she has previously shared.

As the worker is able to separate herself from her setting, she loses the security of being a part of it. She has a growing need to "belong" to a group with a common philosophy from which she can draw help. The quality of the relationship between the consultant and the worker is again of significance. Since it is a relationship with no administrative authority, the worker can use it in her need for a sense of unity. This need also provides the reason for planned group meetings of all workers within a given area, which provides an additional opportunity to develop the sense of being a part of a professional group.

Knowledge About Allied Sciences

In addition to the understanding of individuals, there is also a wide need for such transmittable knowledge as that relating to other sciences, such as the medical and legal. She does not acquire this in a detached setting but rather she receives such knowledge when she is reaching out for it and because she is involved in its use, it has meaning for her. For example, she may ask for help in regard to a child with epilepsy. At this point, the consultant discusses with her knowledge of the disease itself, its social implications and its treatment. Suggestions in reading material are given and the subject discussed on succeeding visits.

An additional value inherent in the situation is that unlike teaching in the school room, the consultant can help the worker with the processes through which she must go in order to make learning a part of herself and of her philosophy and practice. The consultant is constantly getting the worker's reaction to the new knowledge; she knows where the worker stands in her ability to use and integrate new knowledge in her total job. The worker, on the other hand, is forced by her responsibility for the job either to take action or face her inability to do so. She becomes conscious, therefore, of when her inability to act is lack of knowledge and when it springs from within herself. She has, then, no escape but to face the necessity for change in herself. The consultant can help her to see steps which she is capable of taking which in themselves help her develop the confidence necessary for continued growth.

The rural county represents the most fruitful ground for leadership. The public officials in the community live close to the people, they see them daily, hear their problems and know their way of living. They stand in contrast to the executive in large cities who is far removed from the individual needing help and who must depend for his understanding to some extent on theoretical avenues of knowledge. The worker has an unusual responsibility for interpretation of causes of problems, the need for certain kinds of treatment, and the public official with his first hand knowledge is quick to see its soundness.

Because the agency is small the worker is not bogged down by the "red tape" of the large highly organized urban agency. She is in direct contact with the officials and leaders who are active in the agency and community planning. Likewise, because the agency's program is broad and because she carries responsibility for all of its aspects, she can more easily achieve perspective of individual and community problems. It is easier to see the difficulties of one child in relation to all children in the community. For the child who is delinquent, the worker sees not simply the need for treatment of the individual but also the need for interpretation of what is wrong with the conditions under which the child lives. She sees the frequency and the location of delinquency, which serves to indicate the need for the community to exercise its responsibility in providing good growing conditions for all of its children.

In making interpretation, the rural worker also has the advantage of having first hand knowledge of situations and, which is more valuable, the feeling and conviction that is born with sharing with another individual his difficulties. Her information does not need to grow cold with passing through a number of hands. These potentialities for leadership which exist increase the need for help to the worker in utilizing them. It is easy for the worker to lean on the common concept "you can go only as fast as your community will let you" merely to rationalize inactivity. Training, then, has meant helping the worker to see her responsibility as that of leading the community through interpretation of the needs of children.

Training-on-the-job as a method of in-service training has been discussed in terms of its place where there is no local case supervisor. Is there need for this type of training where the agency has a case supervisor? When the worker has no preparation for the job, and the case supervisor, in the light of pressure of work, is not able to give more than a normal amount of supervisory time, in-service training has been used

to share for a period of time this additional responsibility. It is also used when the case supervisor has less ability for the "teaching" aspect of her work than for the administrative responsibility.

Group Discussions

There is not space for full discussion of the group meetings. The need for group discussion has already been indicated. Training-on-the-job which is based on the relationship between two people needs to be rounded out by the discipline and stimulation of group thinking. The need to "belong" to a group which shares in common problems and in a common philosophy also represents a basic need for planned group meetings for all workers who have few opportunities for professional contacts and the stimulation that comes from exchange of thinking under leadership.

Group discussions are planned as a part of the training program and held in the regional office of the State Department. They are monthly all day meetings and include all of the rural workers in a given area, together with the regional staff. The subjects for discussion are selected by the local workers in conference with the regional staff, with leadership in the discussion from the training unit.

The training and experience of the members of the group have ranged from those new to the field to those who were professionally trained and experienced. For some workers it was the first time they had met with other professional workers. The outstanding characteristic of the discussions was the use of material related to the day-to-day problems of the workers from which to integrate theory and philosophy. One valuable device was in the nature of a project in "trying out" ideas and skills following the discussion and at succeeding meetings presenting to the group their experimentations as a basis for additional discussion of what "worked" or what interfered in the use of knowledge. There was continued experimentation which meant re-shaping of old ideas and the use of new concepts.

Since the beginning of the in-service training program several experiments have served to crystallize the character of training as it operates in New York State. The most significant of these was an experiment in "indirect training." This followed the concept of training "from the top down." The training unit gave consultation to the regional child welfare staff, who gave training to the local case supervisor or senior worker when she supervised the junior worker, who in turn trained the worker. This required that

the reactions of the individual who needed help had to pass through four different individuals with varying degrees of knowledge and understanding. Considering the normal range of differences in the interpretations of equally skilled people, the hazards of this "indirect" teaching between unequally skilled persons were considered too great. It served to sharpen the concept that "teaching" must be a direct service between the consultant and the worker.

In conclusion, it should be clearly recognized that in-service training is not a substitute for an agency's responsibility to employ the best professionally equipped staff available. Neither can it substitute for the worker training in a professional school of social work. It is one way which an agency, or the state which shares the agency's responsibility, can bring about a better quality of service to the individuals who come to it for help.

Another "Work Shop for Supervisors"

Case supervisors in League member agencies and a few from certain child welfare service staffs in Ohio, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and possibly a few other adjacent states, are being offered a four-day seminar under the leadership of Miss Fern Lowry, of the New York School of Social Work. It will be held November 11th to 15th, at the New Ebensburg Inn, Ebensburg, Pennsylvania, a lovely spot 75 miles east of Pittsburgh.

Letters indicating the conditions under which case supervisors may enroll have been mailed. Applications already received indicate that there may be a greater demand than the capacity of the seminar, which will be 30, will accommodate.

An article describing the similar Work Shop for Supervisors held in September at Green Lake, Wisconsin, appeared in the September BULLETIN. Information about this November seminar will be sent promptly in response to letters or telegrams. The time for enrollment is short, and preference will be given according to dates upon which applications are filed at the League's office.

The Child Welfare League's Southern Regional Conference will be held on November 6th, 7th and up to noon on the 8th, 1941, at Daytona Beach, Florida. Headquarters are officially at the Seaside Inn. Miss Alice R. Haines, Director, State Welfare Board, Department of Child Welfare, Jacksonville, Florida, is chairman.

BULLETIN

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Henrietta L. Gordon, *Editor*

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Before the Snow Flies

THE coming of cold weather in 1941 will find many mothers among the armies of American women employed outside their own homes. The children of these working mothers need attention which few communities have begun to provide. If mothers must resort to makeshift arrangements for daytime care of their children, limited by their own funds and understanding, many children will suffer from lack of care or from care which is dangerously inadequate.

Recent observations of conditions in California, Florida, Texas, Pennsylvania and New Jersey have convinced the Child Welfare League that resourcefulness is important in planning suitable day care and that each community having a notable increase in the employment of women should give the subject immediate attention.

In one New Jersey county buzzing with defense industry an employer found that children by crawling along a river bank, found their way into the factory where they could see heavy machines operating. He saw the children to their homes only to find the doors locked and the mothers at work. There are small towns in which practically every mother is employed.

It is a responsibility which the mothers should share, and they should receive wages sufficient to permit them to pay a substantial part of the cost of day care of their own children. More than a few types of child care and social service should be utilized. Some mothers should be discouraged from working, in the interests of their children. Some children can be cared for with foster day care in family homes, but in a town where all the mothers work, a day nursery or some extension of the public school's program may be needed. This may be a time when our schools, if augmented with case work, child care and recreational services, could carry a heavy part of this load. The school in most communities stands out as the strongest neighborhood center now serving children.

It is a time when we should warn against development of day nurseries supported only by employers. Nor can parents alone carry the load. Both employers and parents should participate in community efforts so that the entire need may be properly met. League member agencies will be confronting local situations in which they can guide community planning, and some may find it necessary to extend their own work to include foster day care. That some already have done so was revealed in the League's recent study, entitled, "Foster Day Care, Some Current Questions, Problems and Practices." The League's staff will continue to keep in touch with various aspects of this problem.

Some months ago, the U. S. Children's Bureau anticipated a rapid increase in needs for service to children of working mothers. The Bureau has cooperated from the beginning with other federal agencies and sought advisers among those working nationally and locally with such children and their mothers. This has led to organization of an advisory body to consider the increased need for various types of day care. Meetings of this group already held have brought together private and governmental points of view and have considered policies for long range as well as immediate planning for this particular kind of child welfare.

The Child Welfare League will use all its facilities in cooperating with the U. S. Children's Bureau in these efforts. Among those who have participated in the Bureau's discussions on this subject are five representatives of the League, including three members of our board of directors and the executive director.

—HOWARD W. HOPKIRK

New League Members

Since the last issue of the BULLETIN, the following agencies have been admitted to Accredited Membership in the Child Welfare League:—

Connecticut, Hartford

The Hebrew Women's Home for Children
185 Westbourne Parkway
Sidney Kopel, Director

South Carolina, Columbia

Division of Child Welfare, Department of Public Welfare
Wade Hampton State Office Building
Miss Kate Bullock, Chief

Washington, Seattle

Washington Children's Home Society
6516 32nd Avenue Northeast
P. O. Box 124
John F. Hall, State Director

Trends in Foster Parent Education

The Ohio Committee on Child Placing has just issued a brief report of a study of trends in foster parents' education instituted in January of this year. This report is based on 118 replies to a questionnaire sent to member agencies of the Child Welfare League of America. The purpose of this study, reads the report,

" . . . was to determine what methods child placing agencies considered most effective for on-the-job training of foster parents. It proposed to determine how much planning was required on the part of the agency for such a training program, what it cost the agency in terms of time and energy devoted to it by the staff, and what objectives were served by the program."

Foster parent education is defined as.

" . . . those processes, both formal and informal, whereby the foster parent is helped to develop his capacities and skills in the care of his foster children."

The most interesting development indicated in this report is the statement—

"Foster parent education, then, begins with the application interview."

That the study of the foster home prior to use is an educational experience for the prospective foster parents, and prepares them for this unique service, is a radical departure from the concept of "foster home investigation." Such a comprehensive procedure demands that the case worker have a very clear idea of what it means to be a foster parent, and what part that parent plays in the drama of child placement.

The report goes on to describe this part of the education thus:

"In the application interview, and the subsequent study of the foster home, the homefinder familiarizes the foster parent with the administrative factors involved in working with the agency. By a gradual process she acquaints the foster parent with the agency program, as well as the method, objectives and philosophy upon which it functions. The foster parent understands, in a new way, how his own life experiences and his adjustment to them are directly related to his ability to help a foster child. He learns that his service to the agency's children has certain 'professional' aspects, but that his real success lies in creating a family life for the child and also upon his new 'family's' being an integrated part of the com-

munity. He gains some insight into his role with the case worker and the child's own parent and determines for himself whether he can accept the responsibility which these relationships will entail. He begins to see himself as a part of the total agency picture. Further, he becomes familiar with the guidance which the agency has to give through its equipment, such as discussion groups, specialized personnel, agency library, etc. Once acquainted with the job he is to perform, he can also utilize such community resources—lectures, Parent-Teacher Association—for which he feels a need. By the same token, the foster home study points the way to the homefinder to further methods of teaching which will be most effective with this foster family.

"The evaluation period, then, is fully as much an educational experience as it is an exploratory period for the foster parent and homefinder."

There is some discussion of methods of continuing education besides that of the worker-foster parent relationship developed through supervision upon which some agencies depend entirely. Manuals, bulletins, foster parent library, a special foster parent shelf in the public library, as well as group meetings and institutes, are noted.

The report concludes:

"A program of foster-parent education, it would seem, is an essential part of the child placing program. The foster home study and subsequent supervision of the foster home are basic in the educational process. Group discussion is a valuable adjunct to the program in that it (1) makes for a more effective functioning of the program administratively, (2) serves as an economic method of teaching the broad, general and impersonal aspects of child care, and (3) serves as a medium for identification with the agency, which is desirable if agency objectives for children are to be served. However, such a program must be planned to meet the needs of the agency, and its success is dependent upon the homogeneity of the group. The program must of necessity be evaluated periodically to determine whether the methods used (the case work interpretation, the printed material, the group activity) are properly focused and are obtaining desired results."

We are hoping to have a fuller report of this very interesting and valuable study available for circulation to member agencies.

THE BOARD MEMBER SPEAKS—

A LAYMAN LOOKS AT STAFF INTERPRETATION

I am here as an average Board member, and because I don't feel that the average agency staff in a big city does an adequate job with its Board members. (Let me hastily put in that I know there is a great deal to be said on your side.)

We all know that a Board member should know all about his or her agency—how it is run, why it exists, functions of different staff members, recent shifts in policy, current problems. He or she should be thoroughly informed and able to interpret the work of the agency to the community that finances and is served by the agency. *That's a Board member's job.* (I wonder how many Board members realize it.)

I think the biggest mistake staffs make is in treating their Board members as such ideal creatures. Ideally you have a right to expect as high standards as they exact of you.

But while every member of your Board should certainly know that, for example, a recent important change in your policy or addition to your work has been made for various reasons we may not know.

Mostly we feel guilty when we don't know about something we should. We don't want to ask the questions we should for fear of betraying our ignorance. Details of the matters you work with every day slip our minds. When you talk with us, throw in constant reminders, explanatory phrases to refresh our memories. You can't overdo this courtesy. For every one on your Board or committee who knows precisely to what you refer there are five who are not quite sure.

Talk in the simplest terms, and graphically where you are able. You, as professionals, know a tremendous amount more about our mutual subject. We feel inferior to you on this subject. It seems presumptuous that we should advise you.

Don't read us a long case described in technical jargon. We give up before you are half through. Sketch in a brief, elementary outline in our language. Then if necessary bring in the technical details, but only if you are sure we have the picture—and keep referring to the picture.

And when you are through—DON'T ask us our opinions, or decisions with that devastating professional air of . . . "Well, this is what we are going to do anyway, it doesn't really matter what you think, we're just asking you because we have to go through the motions." Give us a feeling of actual participation. How many, many times have I seen Boards and committees insulted by this thoughtless

tone of voice, and does it make your interpretative job harder for you!

If it is too late for our opinion to count, if a policy is clear cut and you are simply demonstrating it, ask for questions, but not advice! This seems simple, but it is a common mistake.

Your Board members often feel superfluous. What can you do to make them feel useful? They are not going to leave a busy home, or put off a child or a friend unless it seems important. A half-hour meeting in your own building may be routine for you, but it may be the backbone of a morning or afternoon to them and means real effort. To have a professional get up in a reluctant, even grudging manner and deliver a report in language that confuses us, on a subject we've not heard of before, the connection of which with the agency work is not too obvious, with no effort to give the group as a whole a feeling of sharing a necessary interest and responsibility. Let this happen to your Board members very often, and they aren't Board members any more, and worse, they aren't doing any community work, but are back in the bridge club. And my point is that it does happen, constantly, which is why you have so many women knitting for the Red Cross instead of participating actively in the work of their own community agencies.

So—

1. Take it for granted that your Board or committee know nothing, or only inaccurately, the subject under discussion. Make it clear to them in elementary terms, tying it in to the purpose of the agency and the current social picture of the city. This takes patience and thought; it is a nuisance and often hard for you.
2. A Board is constantly shifting. Therefore the work done last year must be redone this year. I mean *must*, too. Your results are an intelligent Board and a growing body in the community who understand the work you are, after all, giving your life to.
3. The average Board is a tough nut to crack. Very few with real enthusiasm; others serving because of duty, happenstance, good in some other field. Apathy and ignorance.
4. Don't talk down to, or be irritated by, your Board because they are slow. Just be realistic about their imperfections.
5. Finally, when you ask a lay opinion, be sure you honestly want it, and be prepared to deal with it in the most constructive way for your agency.

—MRS. BRADLEY FISK
Buffalo, N. Y.

BOARD members are invited to use this page more freely and more frequently to discuss their special interests in and contribution to the field of child welfare.

For Every Child the Care He Needs

WILLIAM H. STAVSKY, PH.D.

Children's Service Center of Wyoming Valley

CHANGES in modes of care for dependent children have followed increased understanding of the needs of children. Some of the old, large institutions have been replaced by the cottage type of institution when it was recognized that children needed greater individual affection and care. The latter idea was further extended in the development of foster home care. Today the prevailing theory is that children's needs are best served in a medium approximating that of a real home and that foster parents come closest to fulfilling that ideal.

This is not only a logical assumption, but it has also been verified by experience. However, that same experience has also indicated many a failure in foster home planning which might in the future be avoided by further modification of our present day techniques. Ordinarily, when one speaks of present day methods in caring for dependent children, one deals in statistical terms. The argument that foster home care is the best, derives from the fact that it has been successful in a large majority of cases. What then of the minority, or those children who have not prospered in foster homes? On the other hand, there is the fact that some children thrive successfully in an institutional setting.

Quite obviously, if we argue in terms of percentages, foster home care undoubtedly wins out. It has been doing just that throughout the country. We may expect to be pleased when we complete a good job for the majority of our children, but we certainly cannot accord the minority the same treatment. In other words, child placing is an individual job which must be governed always by individual needs and not statistical figures, even though heavily weighted they may be.

We have been swinging on a pendulum, with institutions at one end, and foster homes at the other. Today we should be ready to cease proselytizing for foster home care or defending institutional care, and begin to utilize all child placing for what it is, an art, dealing with an individual and prescribing what he, as an individual, really needs.

Seasoned people in child care know that to do a satisfactory job, one must have available a variety of

means and techniques. Foster home care may be best for most children, but it is not always the answer. On the other hand, although institutional care may be a frustrating experience for many children, it does provide the exact type of care for some.

We need, then today, to emphasize more than ever the individual character of child placing. Practically speaking, in placing children, we must think and ask, "What does this child need?"

The answer lies in bringing together all our resources in a program designed for flexibility and capacity to answer the above question. It means foster homes and institutions must be brought together to allow for all the special conditions found in the field. Such a merging would be more than the convenient gain of having foster homes and institutions under a single agency. Its chief significance lies in the fact that foster homes and institutions, when functioning together, produce a new whole whose characteristics are such, that new facilities and services, not obtainable in either of the parts, become available and create the possibilities for the varieties of care we deem necessary in the field.

Child placing in a set up of this sort becomes dynamic. It attains a fluidity that permits it to operate in greater conformity with individual differences. In such a program child placing takes on the aspects of a clinical procedure. Placing follows a more reasoned process and is not, as at present, so often the result of fortuitous circumstances or limited concepts.

Actually, the ways and means of bringing together foster home bureaus and institutions is a practical matter and will vary with communities.

There will be difficulties, but they are not unsurmountable. The fact to stress is that if we want to provide the kind of care necessary in child placing, we must be flexible. Practical child placing cannot do a thorough job with foster homes only. It needs greater latitude in satisfying individual wants. These can be fulfilled by creating a set-up made up of both homes and institutions, which when combined will make possible a truly clinical program in child placing.

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

Adoption Legislation

The U. S. Children's Bureau has prepared for the use of states contemplating new adoption legislation "Suggested Content of an Act Relating to Adoption."

This is not a "model law" nor was there any intention that it might be the basis for a "uniform law." It is simply drawn and includes for the consideration of a state committee the essential elements in a satisfactory adoption law.

Conditions in the states vary so considerably it would be most impractical to attempt the enactment of the same legislation everywhere. The adoption law must be correlated with other laws pertaining to the welfare of children in a state to make it really serve the purpose for which it is intended.

The Children's Bureau has expressed the willingness to assist states planning new adoption legislation.

The Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies of Greater New York announces the addition to its staff of Mrs. Lavinia Keys Ebling, to succeed Mrs. Leona Stuart Areson as Agency Consultant.

Fair Rent Committees

The Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply is setting up machinery designed to help local defense communities deal with the problem of exorbitant rental increases. Mayors or other municipal authorities are being encouraged to set up fair rent committees composed of responsible citizens. These committees are expected to study all aspects of their local rent problem. Through hearings on complaints, and through public education, it is hoped exorbitant rentals will be discouraged. Communities may call upon the Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply for aid and advice in the setting up and the operation of these fair rent committees through its field staff.

Child placing agencies will welcome this announcement, for in defense communities exorbitant rentals may threaten the foster home placement program. Exorbitant rentals may force the low income group into overcrowded quarters excluding the foster child.

The League is pleased to announce that Mrs. Dorothy C. Barlow, Supervisor, Connecticut Children's Aid Society, Hartford, Connecticut, has accepted the chairmanship of the National Planning Committee of the 1942 Case Record Exhibit.

BOOK NOTES

PROBLEMS OF AGENCY ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION: Two METHODS OF APPROACH IN CHILDREN'S SERVICE. Child Welfare League of America, New York. Pamphlet (40 pp.), price, 30 cents.

The subject of these papers strikes a note that is for the most part new in the thinking and experience of the case work agency. Case workers have long shown their professional dedication to the unceasing exploration and study and analysis of the client-worker relationship. Only now, however, are we becoming aware that this indispensable relationship is in itself insufficient for the maximum efficiency of service. The vitality of the client-worker relationship rests on the administrative adequacy of the agency. It is natural perhaps that case workers should have been exclusively preoccupied with the technical problems inherent in developing an effective case work relationship and have regarded administration as a simple matter of external mechanics and controls. However, as our concepts of useful service have deepened and broadened we are now coming to recognize that the relationship is only one important element in our professional responsibility. It is not a personal service that we are administering. Therefore, agency administration, functions and policies become, in a sense, the nervous system of the agency, determining when, how and what service shall be rendered. With this recognition we can no longer regard administration as a part, separated from service and with ends distinctive from other methods used by the agency. Administration becomes an essential factor in professional practice and part of our whole body of professional knowledge and skill. In this broad professional sense, administration is the point where agency, client, and community really meet with the common purposes of using the professional resources of the agency in the most complete and appropriate way.

In this day of "mergers," attention to the professional aspect of administration is particularly important. This does not imply, however, that the single function agency, regardless of size of staff and clientele, is not equally dependent for effective service to clients on the strength of the agency structure and organization. However, the multiple function agency, because of its multiplicity of services, is inevitably more likely to bog down if agency structure is not strongly and wisely built.

The point of view expressed in these papers is applicable not only to case work agencies but to all social agencies. They raise provocative, searching questions and on the extent to which agencies answer

them will depend the evolution of social work as a profession.

—ELIZABETH H. DEXTER

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PRINCIPLES OF CHILD CARE IN INSTITUTIONS, a Handbook for Staff Study and Discussion, by the Ohio Committee on Children's Institutions, in cooperation with the Division of Public Assistance, State Department of Public Welfare, Columbus, Ohio, 1941. Price, \$1.00.

This Handbook, prepared for the most part by executives and staff members of child caring institutions and specialists who have had institutional experience, offers very complete material for use in staff training.

The institution of tomorrow will be recognized by the degree of skills it brings into its child training program. Handsome brick buildings, the number of holiday parties provided by well meaning donors and exclusive stress on physical care are being outmoded. People concerned about care given to children who spend from a few months to many years in child caring institutions believe that much of the happiness and well being within an institution depend upon the kindness and wisdom of cottage parents. Character, personality and philosophy of staff as well as program are vital factors in creating the patterns of thinking and doing by which the children live. Children should go to an institution because of a definite need for group life and the particular group life the selected institution offers. Such a plan presupposes a skilled and adequate staff. Executives of child caring institutions increasingly find the selection and training of suitable cottage parents their most baffling problem. Insufficient funds to pay adequate salaries add to the difficulties. After selections from those available have been made, the executive faces the problem of adding to the less tangible assets of his staff the information and discipline of training. Few training courses prepare specifically for such responsible positions. The task of training adults is the more difficult in an under-staffed institution.

Institution officials often feel that contemporary books on child care are written from the point of view of the foster family and miss the point in discussing the problems with which institutions are faced in rearing children in groups. Much that has been written leaves most of the work of planning for staff meetings to an already overburdened administrator.

The Handbook, *Principles of Child Care in Institutions*, is a distinct departure from the usual literature of institutional care. It includes thirty-two

chapters or lessons, each followed by discussion questions and report sheets. Organized suggestions for staff libraries in children's institutions are significant. The wide variety of pertinent subjects covered is indicated by some of the following chapter titles:

- I. The Institution in a Child-Care Program
- III. Importance of the Child's Experiences Before Admission
- IV. The Reception of the Child
- VI. What Every Cottage-Mother Should Know
- VIII. The Cottage-Mother in Vital Relationships
- IX. Individualizing a Child in an Institution
- XVII. The Emotional Life of the Child
- XXII. Providing Money Experiences for Children in Institutions
- XXXII. Staff Meetings in Children's Institutions

This Handbook is significant as a contribution to the professional literature of the field and as an exercise in group thinking and planning. The material is of indisputable value not only to persons working in child caring institutions and interested in staff training, but to all social workers.

—ADA CAUSEY

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CRIMINAL YOUTH AND THE BORSTAL SYSTEM, by William Healy, M.D., and Benedict S. Alper. The Commonwealth Fund, 1941. Pp. vi, 251. Price, \$1.50.

This book is a detailed and refreshing description of the English efforts toward the rehabilitation of certain youthful offenders between the ages of sixteen to twenty-three. The Borstal System of training has been the subject of considerable interest to Dr. Healy, who has followed its development since 1928. More recently, with the collaboration of Mr. Alper, Dr. Healy had opportunities to study Borstal training at close hand, having been commissioned by the Criminal Justice Youth Committee of the American Law Institute to study and evaluate this method of treatment provided to young men committed for delinquent behavior.

The contents of the book are divided in three sections: Part 1, entitled "The Challenge," discusses the extent of crime in youth in America today and illustrates the data with selected examples of youthful offenders who parade through our criminal courts. A brief and critical résumé of the general weaknesses of reformatories throughout the United States closes this section. Part 2, "The Borstal System," deals fully with the establishment, extension and progressive improvement of the unique and politically unhampered training programs at the several institutions. The reader comes to know the distinctive characteristics of each of the nine training institutions scattered throughout England. Flexibility of the program;

continuous experimentation with new techniques and methods of re-education, and individualization of each youth to the ability of the responsible staff members are the cornerstones upon which the Borstal successes have been established. Such principles of institutional training place a heavy responsibility upon the personnel in the system. It is the declared policy of that system to get the best men possible, and then give them as wide a scope as possible. Part 3 consists of an evaluation of the Borstal System and a discussion of how the provisions of the model Youth Corrective Authority Act formulated by the American Law Institute make possible the achievement of results in America which will be comparable to those obtained in England. The book fills a long-felt need of progressive administrators in American "reformatories" who can profit from the philosophy and practices inherent in the Borstal program. It will further be of interest to social workers concerned with the appalling waste of youth and money by the antiquated penal practices which are found in most of our state reformatories.

Certainly it will be the hope of all who come to know the Borstal System through the eyes of Dr. Healy and Mr. Alper that the strongest features of the English methods of training and treatment will be transplanted in the American soil.

—KENNETH R. FORESMAN

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THE FAMILY AND THE LAW, by Sarah T. Knox. 199 pp. University of N. C. Press, Chapel Hill, N. C. Price, \$2.00.

This book should be required reading for all social workers and anyone else whose job it is to utilize or to stimulate the utilization of community facilities. As a matter of fact, it contains information useful to anyone except a hermit. It is a well-written, easily read summary of almost all of the important aspects of law as it affects the ordinary individual in his every-day walk through life.

The book has fifteen chapters, each chapter describing a particular section of the law. Getting information on any one subject without wading through allied subjects is made easy by means of clear and logical subdivisions. This book is roughly divided into three sections.

The first part, consisting of the first three chapters and the last chapters, covers the law generally, giving a brief background and indicating the path which the evolution of the law has followed up to the present time.

Three chapters toward the end of the book take up the criminal law, and court procedure and evidence, mostly as they relate to criminal law. This section serves to acquaint the reader with the rights and liabilities of an individual who has trespassed on forbidden ground. It is in these chapters that the gap between legal and social points of view becomes most apparent, though the author does her best to close this gap by indicating the logic involved in the procedure and enforcement of criminal law.

The main body of the book is taken up with succinct statements of the law that affects our everyday life. The three chapters devoted to marital and parental relationships will be of particular interest to social workers in the family field. Similarly, the chapters on security legislation and on the legal aspects of the home will be helpful to workers in the family field. These latter two chapters, which touch on the rights of wage earners to pensions, benefits, etc., and on the questions of rents, and landlord and tenant relationship, will also be of interest to lay persons who are puzzled as to their rights and liabilities in these important aspects in their lives.

The remaining chapters will be of special interest to social workers in the children's field, covering as they do the power that the state and the courts have over children. One of the three chapters discusses the subject generally and the other two discuss briefly the important subjects of guardianship and adoption.

This book is not, nor is it meant to be, a profound study of law, but is designed as a guide to knowledge on a subject that affects every act of our lives. Laws were originally created solely for the purpose of aiding and improving the relationships of individuals with each other and with the community as a whole. The author of this book has certainly made the path between legal relationships and social ones a much easier path to travel.

—HELEN L. BUTTENWIESER
New York City

Available for Circulation to Members and Affiliates

HOUSEKEEPING AIDE—Circular—W.P.A. Technical Series, Federal Works Agency, September 10, 1941.

THE UNDERLYING PHILOSOPHY OF SOCIAL CASE WORK, by Gordon Hamilton, *The Family*, July 1941.

UNDERLYING SKILLS OF CASE WORK TODAY, by Charlotte Towle, *The Social Service Review*, September, 1941.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MONEY IN THE CHILD-PLACING AGENCY'S WORK, by Leon H. Richman, *The Social Service Review*, September, 1941.